THE POWER OF COMMITMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Commitment is a virtue that is hard to come across these days, both in the secular world and in the Church. Most of us want to do what is convenient and finding people who are committed becomes increasingly difficult.

What does it mean to be committed? It means to be faithful and loyal to a certain cause. It means that we have a sense of responsibility. We are committed when we make a deliberate and unchangeable choice about something and stick to it. To be committed is to express our diligence toward something.

For instance, consider the words we speak. Think about the promises we make about "time." We say that we will meet someone at a certain time and then we are so casual about it. We may arrive half an hour late and think it is perfectly normal. But this simply shows that we are not committed to our words. When we say we would meet someone at a particular time, we must be committed to it. I am ashamed to say that, sometimes, even pastors and ministers of God are so slack, when it comes to keeping time. If you are a minister of God, one of the most important areas where you can demonstrate commitment to your words is with keeping time. When you say something, mean it, and make the effort to keep it.

The Bible teaches us about being committed. The Lord Jesus stated, "*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon*" (Matthew 6:24). Jesus implies here that this is our inherent nature. Man cannot fulfill two commitments that are contrary to each other. For example, we cannot serve God and the world. We will be committed to one, more than the other. It is not possible to be a friend of the world and a friend of God. "*Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God*" (James 4:4). Either we become a friend of God or a friend of the world. There can be no dual commitments. We have to be committed to one master. Jesus is calling us to be committed to Him and strong commitment has to be built within the Body of Christ. This book emphasizes the power of commitment and will inspire you to be committed in all that you do.

1. Characteristics Of A Committed Person

How can we tell if we are really committed to something?

Willingness To Pay Any Price

If a person is committed to the call of God, he will be willing to pay any price to fulfill that call. Some people want to serve God but are unwilling to work hard to reach that place, where God wants them to be. Although God has a plan and a call on your life, things will not unfold automatically. You are a coworker with God and a worker is required to work! God may call you to make sacrifices, to unfold His purposes in your life. If you are really committed to the purposes of God, you will make whatever sacrifice He requires of you.

The Bible states about certain believers, "*And they overcame him* (the devil) *by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death*" (Revelation 12:11). These people were so committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, that they were willing to lay their lives down. If we are committed to the Lord Jesus Christ there is no price too great to pay, even if it means laying down our lives for our Master.

Willingness To Overcome All Obstacles

The person, who is committed, is willing to overcome all obstacles to keep that commitment. He doesn't quit easily and is not looking for a convenient way out. This person is very determined to keep the commitment that was made. Regardless of the obstacles that come in the way, he will press through and do the utmost to overcome everything to keep the commitment. However, a person who is not really committed will do what he promised only if things are convenient. When things get a little difficult, he is likely to make changes, so that he may not have to do what was promised.

Ability To Stay Focused On The Commitment

When a person is committed, he will be focused and not easily distracted. But the one who is not committed to anything, will just drift along, and go where it is convenient.

Luke 9:57-62
57 Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.

58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."
59 Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me go and bury my father."
60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."
61 And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house."
62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

The point that Jesus is trying to get across to us is that when we are committed and have made a decision saying, "Lord, I will follow you," there are no two ways about it. Our commitment to Jesus will cause us to be focused on Him and loosen all earthly ties. However, Jesus is not telling us to forget about our family or loved ones. The point here is that a person who is committed remains focused. He is not likely to get distracted, even by important family responsibilities. None of these things can distract him from the call to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Value Of Being Committed

What is the value of being committed? When everyone is doing what is convenient, why should you and I be different and become people of commitment? What are the benefits of being committed?

Strength, Stability, And Certainty

Being committed brings a degree of strength, stability, and certainty into our lives that will make us unshakable during the difficult times that we may go through.

James 1:8
He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

After teaching us how to pray in faith, James sums up his teaching by making a general statement about a double-minded man. A double-minded man is unstable and unreliable. However, the reverse is also true. A single-minded man—a person who has "made up his mind," a person who is committed—is stable and unshakable.

Blessings

The person who is committed will derive and enjoy the benefits and blessings to a greater extent than the person who is not.

Proverbs 28:20
A faithful man shall abound with blessings.

A faithful man is one who is committed. His whole-hearted commitment is what makes him faithful. The one who does something half-heartedly will not enjoy what he does as much as the one who does the same thing whole-heartedly. Without doubt, the person who does it whole-heartedly will obviously do a better job and hence have a greater reward.

Think about the physical body. God intended for the parts of the body to be joined together, to function as one unit. You don't find your hand joined to your body today, and then floating around and becoming part of someone else's body tomorrow. Neither do you find your heart pumping in your body today and then pumping in someone else's body tomorrow. If God had designed our body parts to be disjointed and working

independently, then we would have body parts—hearts, lungs, hands, or eyes—just floating around. Every now and then, some of these parts would come together to do something and then disperse again. This seems so ridiculous and we thank God that this is not the way our physical bodies are made to function. Although medical science has made transplants of certain body parts possible, the general rule is that each organ of your body is "committed" to your body and works well when attached to the rest of your body. Together your body can perform and accomplish much.

The physical body has a "message" for us about the local church, which is a part of the whole Body of Christ. When we think about the local church, it is a common sight to see people hop around from church to church. This is not the way God intended His people to live their Christian lives. Every believer needs to be committed to a local church where he or she believes that God has called him or her to be. We need to be committed to the local body of believers where God has placed us. Only when we are faithful to that local body will we experience the full blessings of being a part of that body. Those who merely hop around won't get much done, neither will they be helpful in getting things done!

Only when we are committed, can we derive long-term blessings and benefits. Many of us just want the "Sunday morning entertainment," and that's why we hop around from church to church. We want the pastor to preach the message that we want to hear. But if the pastor preaches the Word of the Lord—often something different from what we want to hear—our commitment sails out of the window and we walk out of the door! If we want to have long-term benefits and blessings, we must be committed to a local body, work, and serve there.

Rewards

Hebrews 11:6
He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

We must seek Him with diligence. There is a commitment to seeking God. Are we committed to seeking God or do we seek God only when we have some spare time? Are we committed to spending time in prayer and studying the Word of God, or do we seek God only if time permits? The Bible says that God will reward those who diligently seek Him and not those who seek Him only when it is convenient for them. The person who is committed will experience God's rewards in his life.

Progress

1 Timothy 4:15b
Give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

The person who is committed is the one who is going to make progress. Paul is advising a young man named Timothy on how to be a minister of God. He tells him not to follow these instructions half-heartedly or merely when it is convenient, but to give himself entirely to the things he has been taught. Paul says that when he does so, his progress, maturity, growth, and advancement will become evident to all.

We can apply the same principle in our lives as well. We must be committed to being a servant of God, committed to reaping the harvest, committed to being an example to other believers, and committed to the responsibility of leading the church. When we are thus committed, our progress will be evident. He who is committed is the one who will make progress. The person who does things half-heartedly will remain stagnant. When we give of ourselves entirely—spirit, soul, and body—to the work that is before us, only then will we make progress and people will see it.

3. ARE YOU COMMITTED?

If someone were to question our commitment, we will probably be quick to answer that we are committed. Maybe the answers to these questions will throw more light on the extent of our commitment.

- Are we people of commitment or do we live by convenience?
- Are we committed to doing what is right? Are we committed to righteousness, doing what is right all the time, everywhere, in every situation or do we compromise and alter our stand according to our convenience?
- Are we committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, our local church, and to the Body of Christ?
- Are we committed to our spouse, marriage, and family? Will we love our spouse through the "ups" and "downs" of life?
- Are we committed to the promises we make?
- Are we committed to our place of work, to our boss, our coworkers, and our friends?
- Are we committed to spending time with God?

How deep is our commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ? The Lord Jesus said, "*And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved*" (Matthew 10:22). Are we committed to Jesus Christ only when it is convenient and easy or are we committed to following Him till the end, even when people hate us? What is the depth of our commitment to Jesus Christ?

What is our commitment to our local church? Are we committed to our local church only when there is good music, nice sermons, and everything seems calm and easy-going or are we committed even when the church goes through some stormy weather? Will we still be around or will we look for another church?

At All Peoples Church, we are committed to going out and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we go out and preach about Jesus, we are inevitably going to attract attention. We may even face persecution. Will we stay in the local church when it is being persecuted or will we go somewhere else? Will we say, "Lord, I believe I am a part of this body and if this body is persecuted, I will stay committed and face whatever comes our way?" If you are looking for a local body that is going to have everything nice and easy and never be persecuted, then All Peoples Church is not the place for you. But if you are looking for a body that is going to proclaim Jesus unashamedly and which may be persecuted for doing so, and if you are looking for a body where you may experience some hardship for the name of Jesus Christ, then you are welcome to All Peoples Church!

God has commissioned us to go and preach the Gospel, to bring people out of darkness

into His marvelous light. As we go about doing that, the devil will not stay quiet. However, being a part of the local body, we should be willing to endure persecution, and come out stronger. That should be our commitment. We should be committed to the vision that God has given to us as a body.

Are we committed to the other members of our local body? Do we care for each other? Do we love each other?

Are we committed to the Body of Christ in our city? If we are committed to the churches in our city and the pastors/ministers God has raised up, then we will hesitate to bad-mouth them. We will always seek their good and well-being. Even if some fall, stumble, and make mistakes, we will pray for them, not cut them down.

Are we committed to the dreams, visions, and call of God for our lives? The Bible tells us, "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 15:58). Always be committed to the work of the Lord because you know that your work in the Lord is not in vain.

Revelation 3:15-16
15 I know your works, that you art neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.
16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

We need red-hot commitment. It is not enough to have "some works" going, if our commitment to Jesus is lukewarm. Our best programs are useless, if not birthed out of a red-hot commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to make the decision to either be hot or cold.

The Lord Jesus warned us that in the last days, the love of many would grow cold. "*And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved*" (Matthew 24:12-13). Your commitment to Jesus Christ will enable you to endure to the end.

The hour to be committed is now!

Partner with All Peoples Church

All Peoples Church ministers beyond its own borders as a local church by reaching out all across India, especially North India, with a special focus on (A) Strengthening Leaders, (B) Equipping young people for ministry and (C) Building up the Body of Christ. Several training seminars for young people, and Christian Leaders conferences are held throughout the year. In addition, several thousands of copies of books are distributed free of cost in English and other Indian languages with the purpose of equipping believers in the Word and in the Spirit.

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About All Peoples Church

At All Peoples Church (APC), our vision is to be salt and light in the city of Bangalore and a voice to the nation of India and to the nations of the world.

At APC, we are committed to presenting the complete, uncompromised Word of God in the anointing and demonstration of His Holy Spirit. We believe that good music, creative presentations, brilliant apologetics, contemporary ministry techniques, latest technology, and so on, can never substitute the God-ordained approach of proclaiming the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4-5; Hebrews 2:3-4). Our theme is Jesus, our content is the Word, our method is Holy Spirit power, our passion is people, and our goal is Christlike maturity.

With our main base in Bangalore, All Peoples Church has several other church locations in India. To get a current listing and contact information of All Peoples Church locations, please visit our website at **www.apcwo.org/locations** or send an email to **contact@apcwo.org**.

DO YOU KNOW THE GOD WHO LOVES YOU?

About 2000 years ago, God came into this world as a man. His name is Jesus. He lived a perfectly sinless life. Since Jesus was God in flesh, everything He said and did revealed God to us. The words He spoke were the very words of God. The things He did were the actions of God. Jesus did many miracles on the Earth. He healed the sick and suffering. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame to walk and healed every kind of sickness and disease. He fed the hungry by miraculously multiplying a few loaves of bread, calmed the storm and did many other wonderful things.

All of these actions reveal to us that God is a good God who wants people to be well, whole, healthy and happy. God wants to meet the needs of people.

So why then would God decide to become a man and step into our world? Why did Jesus come?

All of us have sinned and done things that are unacceptable before the God who created us. Sin has its consequences. Sin is like a great unsurpassable wall between God and us. Sin separates us from God. It prevents us from knowing and having a meaningful relationship with the One who created us. Therefore, many of us try to fill this void with other things.

Another consequence of our sins is eternal separation from God. In God's court, the penalty for sin is death. Death is eternal separation from God in hell.

But the good news is that we can be free from sin and be restored to God. The Bible says, **"For the wages [payment] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23)**. Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world when He died on the cross. Then, three days later He rose again, showed Himself alive to many and then went back into heaven."

God is a God of love and mercy. He does not wish that any person be lost in hell. And so He came, to provide a way for the entire human race to be free from sin and its lasting consequences. He came to save sinners—to rescue people like you and me from sin and eternal death.

To receive this free forgiveness of sins, the Bible tells us that we have to do just one thing—accept what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross and to believe in Him whole-heartedly.

"… through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43).

“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

You too can receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins if you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following is a simple prayer to help you make a decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He has done for you on the cross. This prayer will help you express your acceptance of what Jesus has done for you and receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins. This prayer is only a guideline. You can also pray in your own words.

Dear Lord Jesus, today, I have understood what You did for me on the cross. You died for me, You shed Your precious blood and paid the penalty for my sins, so that I could be forgiven. The Bible tells me that whoever believes in You will receive forgiveness for their sins.

Today, I make a decision to believe in You and to accept what You did for me, by dying for me on the cross and rising again from the dead. I know I cannot save myself by my own good works, neither can any other human save me. I cannot earn forgiveness for my sins.

Today, I believe in my heart and say with my mouth that You died for me, You paid the penalty for my sins, You rose again from the dead, and by faith in You, I receive forgiveness and cleansing for my sins..

Thank You Jesus. Help me to love You, to know You more and to be faithful to You. Amen.

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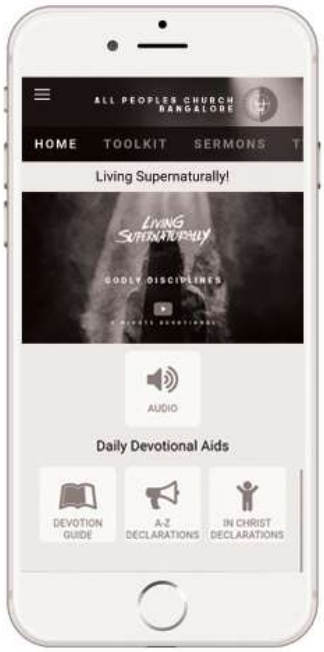

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All Peoples Church Bible College and Ministry Training Center (APC-BC), in Bangalore, India, provides Spirit-filled, anointed, hands-on training and equipping for ministering in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit along with doctrinally sound and intellectually stimulating study of God's Word. We believe in developing the whole person for ministry emphasizing godly character, deep roots in the Word of God, and powerful demonstrations of signs, wonders and miracles—all flowing out of an intimate relationship with the Lord.

At APC-BC in addition to sound teaching we emphasize the love of God in demonstration, the anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural work of God. Several young men and women have been trained and sent out to fulfill God's call over their lives.

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To **apply online**, and for more information about the college, curriculum, eligibility criteria, tuition costs and to download the application form, please visit: **apcbiblecollege.org**

APC-BC is accredited by the Nations Association for Theological Accreditation (NATA).

In today's world, commitment is a virtue that is hard to come across. Most of us want to do what is convenient and finding people who are committed becomes increasingly difficult. Commitment is a discipline. It is a deliberate choice we make.

The Bible teaches us about being committed. The Lord Jesus stated, *"No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other , or else he will be loyal to the one and despite the other. You cannot serve God and mammon"* (Matthew 6:24). Jesus thus describes that this is our inherent nature. Man cannot have two commitments that are contrary to each other. This book emphasizes the power of commitment and will inspire you to being committed in all you do. The hour to be committed is now!

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